United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

EPA Signs Agreement for Upper River Cleanup

Sheboygan River and Harbor Site
Sheboygan County, Wisconsin May 2003

Introducing...

John O'Grady permanently replaced Tom Short in March as EPA's remedial project manager. John, who has been with EPA for 16 years, has worked on Superfund sites for the past nine years. Prior to joining the Superfund program, John worked in other EPA programs including water quality permitting and pesticides. John can be reached at (312) 886-1477 or (800) 621-8431x61477 ogrady.johnj@epa.gov

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Site-related documents may be reviewed at:

Mead Public Library
710 N. 8th St.
Sheboygan

Sheboygan City Hall
828 Center Ave.
Sheboygan

Certain EPA information can be viewed electronically at:
http://**www.epa.gov/region5/sites**

An agreement, called a consent decree, was recently signed by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of Justice and Tecumseh Products Co. The agreement, which had been under negotiation for the past year, commits the company to clean up the upper portion of the Sheboygan River. It requires Tecumseh to clean up contaminated sediment, flood plain soil, and ground water at the Tecumseh facility. This work will be done in phases starting with investigations and source control at the facility and then proceeding on to evaluation of the in-stream sediment and flood plain soil and eventually cleanup of that sediment and soil.

Since this agreement only includes cleanup of the upper river, another agreement to clean up the middle river, lower river, and inner harbor will be done separately. If the lower portions of the river were to be cleaned up first, there is a chance that they could become recontaminated during cleanup of the upper river.

Once the consent decree is lodged in federal court, DOJ will begin a 30-day comment period by posting an announcement in the Federal Register (www.epa.gov.region5/fedrgster). The decree will also be posted on EPA's Web site (www.epa.gov/region5/sites). Public comments may be directed to the Assistant Attorney General, Environment and Natural Resources Division, P.O. Box 7611, Washington, D.C. 20044-7611. Refer to United States v. Tecumseh Products Co. (E.D. Wis.), Reference Number 03-C-0401.

After DOJ responds to the comments, it will ask that a judge enter the consent decree in federal court to finalize the agreement. Information-gathering activities, design of the cleanup components, and some sampling could proceed this year with actual cleanup beginning in 2004.

Upper river cleanup timeframe

Before cleanup can begin, Tecumseh will design the project. This includes:

- submitting a work plan to EPA–Fall 2003
- selecting contractors–Fall 2003
- starting pre design work–Winter 2003
- submitting a final design document to EPA–Winter 2004
- beginning cleanup–Summer 2004

Pre design work

Tecumseh's work plan will detail some "pre design" work, some of which can be done while the cleanup for the upper river is being designed:

Ground water and additional source control

- Monitor ground water to further define the extent of PCBs at Tecumseh's Sheboygan Falls plant.
- Identify possible PCB sources to the river. This will include a study of existing sewer lines that may be serving as PCB pathways into the river.
- Monitor the ground water semiannually at the Sheboygan Falls plant for five years and then less frequently, as appropriate.

Soft sediment removal

- Look at the upper river to document current locations, average concentrations and amount of PCBs in soft sediment deposits.
- Dredge the deposits.
- Sample the dredged areas to track the removal's progress.
- Dispose of dredged sediment at an approved landfill in Wisconsin or an out-of-state facility authorized to accept PCBs.
- Collect and treat used water before discharging it back to the river.

Flood plain soil removal

- Sample soil in the flood plain areas to refine the extent of soil containing high levels of PCBs.
- Remove PCB-contaminated soil using excavation or riverbank stabilization techniques.

Fish monitoring

- Analyze PCB concentrations in the upper river until fish consumption advisories are lifted, fish fillet PCB concentrations decrease to specific levels or for 30 years (whichever comes first).
- Collect soft sediment samples at least once every five years after completion of the upper river cleanup.
- Inspect cleaned flood plain areas for erosion semiannually for two years after completion of the upper river cleanup.

Although it may seem as if many of these tasks have already been completed in past river studies, PCBs move over time and it is important to understand where they are today so the right decisions are made concerning the cleanup.

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SHEBOYGAN RIVER AND HARBOR SITE: Upper River Cleanup Agreement

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